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tholemew's Hospitals, in London, are so great, that the reflection must deprive most to whom it might occur, of the pleasure which the magnificence of those buildings would otherwise occasion. After a necessary attention has been paid to durability, it is evident that cheapness of construction in buildings of this nature, should be considered as a primary object. It would therefore be worth while to determine, whether slated cottages could not be raised at a cheaper rate, for the accommodation of a greater number of people at the rural establishment proposed, than any other species of building; and if a number of stories, should, on the contrary, be proved cheaper, then to determine whether much might not be saved by laying the floors with plaster (gypsum) instead of board, as is practised in Derbyshire and Staffordshire; (for which materials might be obtained at a cheap rate from the gypsum quarries in the neighbourhood of Belfast) or to lay them with large square tiles, in the same manner as is done at Paris. It would also be worth consideration, whether cast iron might not be substituted for wood to advantage, in the principle supports of the roofs, while timber is at the present high price. The opinion of many good judges is in favour of this measure, and a very ingenious gentleman of Birmingham (Mr. Norton) has lately taken a patent for a mode of doing this, which he asserts he can prove to be cheaper than constructing a roof of wood.

Enough has been written on the subject of food for the poor, by Sir Benjamin Thomson (perhaps better known by the name of Count Rumford, as preferring the latter title, though for reasons which are not very obvious) to render any thing on this head almost superfluous. It may not, however, be amiss, to remind the gentlemen who may have the management of such an institution, of an error, which was made on this point at the House of Industry in Dublin, in feeding people on wheaten bread, who had all their lives before been used to live on oaten bread, or potatoes instead of it. Many physicians are of opinion that potatoes do not afford sufficient nourishment by themselves; but granting this, which however seems very doubtful, it is certain the deficiency might be made

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up in a much cheaper manner, by soups, prepared by some of the excellent receipts of the above author, or perhaps by a proper allowance of milk, than by any quantity of wheat bread, at its usual price.

Many particulars would have to be considered in detail, besides those mentioned, in carrying a plan of this nature into execution; but the gentlemen who would have to superintend the business here, on account of their superior local knowledge, could best arrange matters of this nature; and indeed in this respect Belfast has considerable advantage; for in few towns in the kingdom can a greater number of liberal and enlightened gentlemen be found, more capable of directing such an institution in the best manner.

It might appear after this assertion, that advice to gentlemen of this description is superfluous, and what is here written might be spared; but there is no certainty that the same thoughts will occur to the best informed minds, as might to others, perhaps not so well prepared; and perhaps something may occur in those pages, which may be found of essential utility, when properly matured by competent judges. At all events, what has been written, proceeds alone from a desire to do good; and as it was well intended, it is hoped it will be so considered. J. W. B.

Belfast, Sept. 1809.

For the Belfast Monthly Magazine.

SURRY INSTITUTION.

THIS Institution is for the same purposes as the Royal Institution of London: lectures are given at the buildings belonging to it, on various branches of science and literature with considerable ability, and a good library is provided for the use of the members.

Institutions of this nature are becoming every year more general in England, and promise fair to diffuse a taste for the sciences, which no doubt, will, in many instances, produce that degree of information capable of extending and improving the general state of knowledge. The example of England, will, we hope, be followed by Ireland in this respect. It will indeed be in some degree necessary; for the common forms

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of Education will soon be insufficient to furnish the information fit for the general intercourse of polished society. A gentleman will be always expected to be better informed than the labouring, classes, and if he is not, will meet with some unpleasant sensations of inferiority in company, that every manly spirit would wish to avoid; and mere capability of reading and writing will soon cease to be a distinction; for the new discoveries of methods by which these primary acquirements can be taught to great numbers of children at once at a very trifling expense, will in a few years most probably make this small portion of learning universal among the lowest ranks of society.

The apartments of the Surry Institution, consist of two elegant and convenient rooms for reading newspapers, pamphlets, and periodical works. A square room for the reception of the large philosophical apparatus. A most superb circular anti-room for containing the smaller apparatus, fitted up in the style of an open Grecian temple, between the columns of which are an assemblage of bronze statues, representing the Fathers of Science and Literature, such as Homer, Bacon, Locke, Newton, Barrow, Franklin, &c. &c. This opens to a square anti-room, which leads on the right to a conversation-room and to the laboratory, which latter has been fitted up under the immediate direction of Mr. Knight, of Foster lane, and is allowed by good judges to be at once convenient, compact, and elegant. On the left of this anti-room is the library, near sixty feet long, and twenty-four feet high, with a gallery on three

sides, to which there is an easy access by a flight of safe steps; the centre opening of this square anti-room leads directly to the lecture-room or theatre, which we venture to announce one of the most complete and elegant of its size in the metropolis; it is a circular building, and consists of an amphitheatre, of eighteen rows of seats, an under and an upper gallery, the latter of which is supported by eight pillars, composed of Derbyshire spar, and crowned round the dome by a ballustrade of British marble, the whole of which was erected by the late proprietor, Mr. James Parkinson, at an expense of upwards of five hundred guineas.

It has been well observed in the prospectus of this Institution, that, "Public Literary Institutions are the highest ornament of a state," and it surely must be a source of high gratification and exultation to the inhabitants of the metropolis, when they reflect that their fellow creatures in almost every other nation in Europe are mourning amidst the smouldering ruins of their cities, towns, and villages, they are peaceably proceeding in the paths of science, and through the wonderful works of nature, illustrated and rendered familiar by numerous experiments in this place, and are looking with increased reverence and adoration up to Nature's God.

It would be unjust to the present lecturer on experimental philosophy and chemistry at this Institution, not give him the praise of a popular and manly eloquence, and of conducting his various and impressive experiments with great precision, and considerable originality.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF DISTINGUISHED PERSONS.

ACCOUNT OF THE LATE JOHN FOTHERGILL, M.D.F.R.S.

Continued from No. 13. p. 125.

BUT in the summer, there are much fewer residents in the metropolis, and in proportion still less sickness; prevented, therefore, as he was, by the mutual influence of his fame, and of his sensibility, from the en-

joyment of any relaxation at Upton, (whither, if he went, messages frequently intercepted him) he chose to retreat, for a few weeks, at this salubrious season of the year to Lea-Hall, in Cheshire, a seat belonging to the Leicester family, about 18 miles from Warrington, where two of his brothers resided in the year